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• MARKS •

ON

GOLD & SILVER PLATE

Imported into the United Kingdom.

ILLUSTRATED

Including the Order in Council of 1907, referring to
Foreign Gold and Silver Watch-Cases.

BY

WILLIAM REDMAN, F.R.G.S.

18, St. Stephen's Road, Bradford.



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202025

Imported Watch-Cases.

MEMORANDUM.

Under Section 59 of the Customs Act, 1842 (5 & 6 Vict. c. 47), all Plate imported into the United Kingdom from foreign parts is required to be of the English standard, and no such Plate is to be sold, exchanged, or exposed for sale, until after being assayed, stamped, and marked in the same manner as Plate wrought in England, Scotland, or Ireland ; and under Section 10 of the Revenue Act, 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. c. 53), all imported Plate is required to be entered to be warehoused, and is not to be delivered for home use till properly assayed, stamped, and marked.

For many years past it has been assumed that the word "Plate" in the above-mentioned Acts of 1842 and 1883 did not include Watch Cases, and this view of the law has been accepted and acted on by the Customs and the other authorities concerned, such as the Goldsmiths' Company. It has, however, been recently decided by the Court of Appeal that this view is incorrect, and that imported Watch Cases are "Plate," and must comply with the provisions of the Acts of 1842 and 1883.

After several years of dispute and litigation, the nice point as to whether Gold and Silver Watch Cases imported into this country are "Plate" within the meaning of the Acts of 1842 and 1883 has at last, to all appearance, been settled. This decision is one which is eminently satisfactory to English manufacturers and to the trade generally. The following is the official notice just issued by the Board of Trade :—

"All Gold and Silver Watch Cases imported into this country on and after June 1st next will be dealt with by the Customs as Plate within the meaning of Section 10 of the Revenue Act, 1883, which provides that Gold and Silver Plate shall not be delivered for home use until assayed, stamped, and marked according to law."

It is evident from this notification of the Board of Trade that the appeal to the Lords by certain firms who were prosecuted by the Goldsmiths' Company, London, has been withdrawn. The wonder is

why the foreign manufacturers have been allowed so long to unfairly compete with our own English Watch Trade, which has suffered considerably owing to the importers selling their goods in this country unstamped by our Assay Authorities. This thing ought to have been stopped years ago. I sincerely trust that now the end has come.

I consider, however, that this new law ought not to apply to cheap Watches sent here for exportation, because that would injure the trade of this country without benefiting anyone.

NOTE.—In future all Watch Cases imported into the United Kingdom, whether they contain movements or not, will (I understand) have to pass through the Customs, and will be sent by them to the Assay Offices to be assayed and marked before they are delivered to the importer.

The following particulars relating to marks on foreign Gold and Silver Plate will, I hope, be of interest to the readers of this pamphlet :—

Marks on Foreign Gold and Silver Plate.

Previous to 1842 large quantities of Silver Plate were imported into this country, bearing forged British marks, most of which was of an inferior quality. This caused trouble and loss to the English manufacturers, who had to submit all their wares to the Assay Masters to be tested and marked before the pieces were offered for sale.

In 1842 a law was passed which enacted that all imported Gold and Silver Plate for sale in the British Isles must be equal in quality to English-made Plate, and must not be sold by importers until it had been duly assayed and marked at one or other of the British Assay Offices. There was a clause in the Act of 1842 to exempt from assay foreign Plate imported or made previous to the year 1800. Importers generally took an advantage of this clause, and for years they were selling Plate that was stated to have been made during the 18th century. It is considered that by the aid of this exemption clause large shipments of modern-made articles, both real and inferior, were sold in Great Britain, unmarked, as if no Act had been passed. It has also been stated that the Act of 1842 was never strictly adhered to.

Act of 1867.

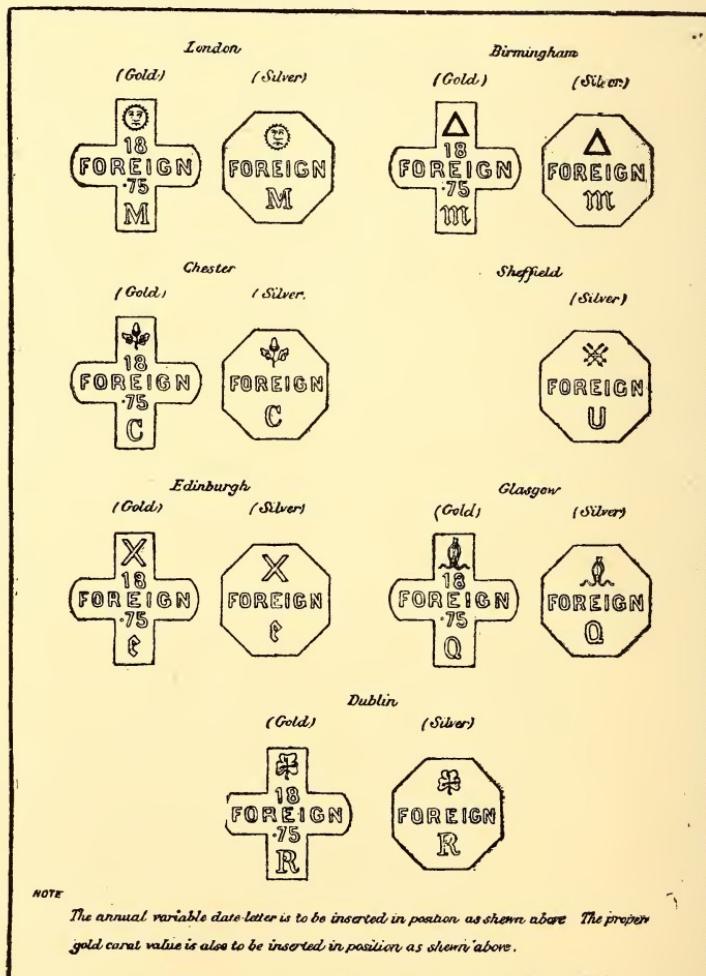
In this year the Roman letter F in an oval shield was ordered to be stamped on all imported Gold and Silver Plate, along with the usual British Assay Office marks. Up to this time there was no way of distinguishing by the assay marks between English Plate and imported Plate. About 1872 this mark F was discontinued, and foreign Plate was again allowed to be sold in this country unmarked. From 1872 to 1883 large consignments of counterfeit wares flooded the country, which caused the Act of 1867 to be renewed or again enforced and strictly adhered to. The letter F was used to distinguish foreign-made Plate (not Watch Cases) up to 1904, when a separate mark for each Assay Authority was introduced.

From the "London Gazette," May 9th, 1887.

Marks on Foreign-made Watch Cases.

All Gold and Silver Watch Cases imported into this country for sale must be tested and stamped with a special punch, which bears altogether a different mark from the English mark as follows:—

- London mark (Phœbus) or full moon with rays around it.
- Birmingham mark (Equilateral Triangle).
- Chester mark (Acorn and two Leaves).
- Sheffield mark (Crossed Arrows).
- Edinburgh mark (St. Andrew's Cross).
- Glasgow mark (Bishop's Mitre).
- Dublin mark (Shamrock).



This Act has been, in practice, almost a dead letter. Very few foreign makers have sent their Watch Cases to this country to be marked as above. In consequence of this, it is a very rare thing for one to meet with a Watch Case marked in this way. I have only seen three during the twenty years the Act has been in force. This law has just lately been repealed. See Page 12.

The Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate Act.

(Which came into force November 1st, 1904; was revoked on May 29th, 1906.)

(1) Where, for the purpose of complying with Sections 59 and 60 of the Customs Act, 1842, or Section 10 of the Revenue Act, 1883, any Plate has to be assayed, stamped, and marked, or where for any other purpose any Plate or article imported from a foreign part is brought to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom to be assayed, stamped, or marked, the Plate or article shall be marked in such manner as his Majesty may determine by Order in Council so as readily to distinguish whether the Plate or other article was wrought or made in England, Scotland, or Ireland, or was imported from foreign parts, and such mark or marks shall be deemed to be a compliance with the said Acts.

(2) Any person who, after a date fixed by his Majesty by Order in Council, brings or causes to be brought any Plate or other article to be assayed, stamped, and marked at an Assay Office, shall state in writing, in manner provided by his Majesty by Order in Council, whether the Plate or article was wrought or made in England, Scotland, or Ireland, or was imported from foreign parts; but it shall not be necessary to make such statement in writing where any Plate or other article is brought to an Assay Office in charge of an officer of Customs under the provisions of the Revenue Act, 1883, for the purpose of being assayed, stamped, or marked as having been imported from foreign parts.

(3) Where any person who, after the date fixed as aforesaid, brings or causes to be brought any Plate or other article to be assayed, stamped, and marked at an Assay Office, does not know and is not able to state whether the Plate or other article was wrought or made in England, Scotland, or Ireland, or was imported from foreign parts, such person shall make a statement in writing to that effect in the manner prescribed in this Section, and the Plate or other article referred to in the said statement shall be stamped and marked as if it were imported from foreign parts.

(4) If any person knowingly makes a false statement under this section he shall be liable, on summary conviction, under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts, to a fine not exceeding five pounds for every article in respect of which the false statement is made.

(5) The Customs Act, 1842, shall apply as if a reference to the mode of marking required under this Act were substituted for a reference to the mode of marking under that Act.

(6) His Majesty may, by Order in Council, revoke, vary, or add to any Order in Council made under this Act.

Order in Council.

The King, in exercise of the powers vested in his Majesty by the above provisions, on the 24th of October, 1904, determined that :—

(1) The mark or marks to be stamped or marked upon any Plate or article imported from foreign parts brought to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom to be assayed, stamped, or marked, shall be the mark or marks described in the First Part of the Schedule hereto.

(2) The statement in writing to be made by any person, other than an officer of Customs, who, after the 31st day of October, 1904, brings or causes to be brought any Plate or article to be assayed, stamped, and marked at an Assay Office, shall be in the form set out in the Second Part of the Schedule hereto.

SCHEDULE.

PART I.

On Foreign Gold Plate.

The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto; the carat value of the gold, together with the decimal equivalent of the carat value, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

On Foreign Silver Plate.

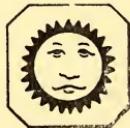
The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto, together with the decimal equivalent of the standard value of the Silver, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

APPENDIX.

FIGURE 1.

PARTICULAR MARK FOR EACH ASSAY AUTHORITY.

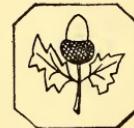
LONDON
(Phœbus).



BIRMINGHAM
(Equilateral Triangle)



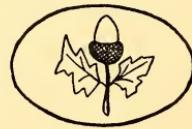
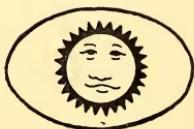
CHESTER
(Acorn and two Leaves)



SHEFFIELD
(Crossed Arrows).

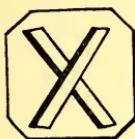


GOLD.

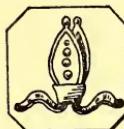


SILVER.

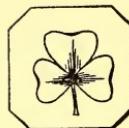
EDINBURGH
(St. Andrew's Cross).



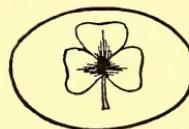
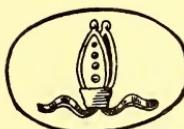
GLASGOW
(Bishop's Mitre)



DUBLIN
(Shamrock)



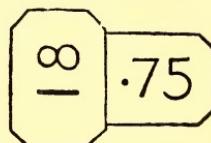
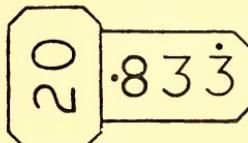
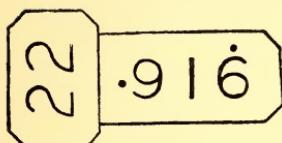
GOLD.



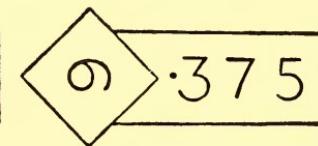
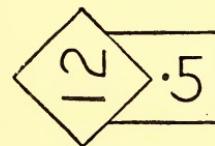
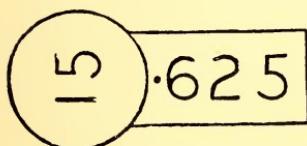
SILVER.

FIGURE 2.

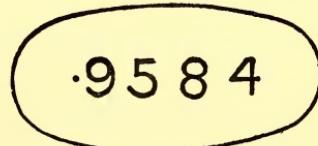
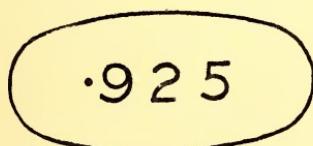
REPRESENTATIVE OF STANDARD MARKS.



GOLD



GOLD.



SILVER.

Extract from the "London Gazette," May 15th, 1906.

Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate.

AT THE COURT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE, MAY 11TH, 1906.

And whereas by Order in Council dated the twenty-fourth day of October, one thousand nine hundred and four, his Majesty did determine the mark or marks to be stamped or marked upon any Plate or article imported from foreign parts brought to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom to be assayed, stamped, or marked at an Assay Office, and did determine the form of the statement in writing to be made by any person other than an officer of Customs bringing or causing to be brought any Plate or article to be assayed, stamped, and marked at an Assay Office :

And whereas it has been found expedient (i) to vary the said Order in Council of the twenty-fourth day of October, one thousand nine hundred and four, by altering the particular marks to be used by the Assay Authorities of London, Sheffield, Glasgow, and Dublin, and (ii) to alter the form of the statement in writing set out in Part II. of the Schedule to the said Order, and to effect these alterations it has been determined to revoke the said Order in Council of the twenty-fourth day of October, one thousand nine hundred and four :

Now, therefore, His Majesty, by and with the advice of his Privy Council and in exercise of the powers vested in him by the above recited provisions doth as from the dates hereinafter respectively specified revoke the said Order in Council of the twenty-fourth day of October, one thousand nine hundred and four, and doth determine that as from the said dates respectively :—

(1) The mark or marks to be stamped or marked upon any Plate or article imported from foreign parts brought to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom to be assayed, stamped, or marked shall be the mark or marks described in the First Part of the Schedule hereto and the following authorities, that is to say,

The Wardens and Commonalty of the Mystery of Goldsmiths of the City of London,

The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate, Birmingham,

The Company of Goldsmiths of the City of Chester,

The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate, Sheffield,

The Incorporation of Goldsmiths of the City of Edinburgh,

The Goldsmiths' Company of the City of Glasgow,

The Fraternity or Company of Goldsmiths of the City of

Dublin,

shall respectively cause to be stamped or marked upon any Plate or article imported from foreign parts and brought to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom to be assayed, stamped, or marked the respective mark or marks described in the First Part of the Schedule hereto.

(2) The statement in writing to be made by any person other than an officer of Customs who brings or causes to be brought

any Plate or article to be assayed, stamped, and marked at an Assay Office shall be in the form and signed in the manner set out in the Second Part of the Schedule hereto.

This Order shall come into operation and take effect as from and after the twenty-ninth May, one thousand nine hundred and six, except so far as regards the Assay Offices of Sheffield and Glasgow, and as regards those offices this Order shall come into operation and take effect as from and after the first July, one thousand nine hundred and six.

SCHEDULE.

PART I.

On Foreign Gold Plate or Articles.

The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto; the carat value of the gold, together with the decimal equivalent of the carat value, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

On Foreign Silver Plate or Articles.

The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto, together with the decimal equivalent of the standard value of the silver, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

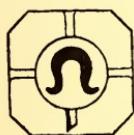
The mark for the annual date letter is to be added by each Assay Authority after the mark for the particular Hall and the mark for standard.

APPENDIX.

FIGURE 1.

PARTICULAR MARK FOR EACH ASSAY OFFICE.

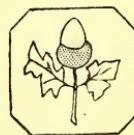
LONDON
(Sign of Constellation Leo).



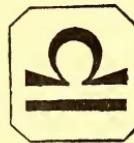
BIRMINGHAM
(Equilateral Triangle).



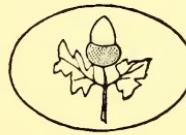
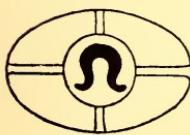
CHESTER
(Acorn and two Leaves).



SHEFFIELD
(Libra).



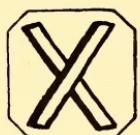
GOLD.



SILVER.

FIGURE 1.

EDINBURGH
(St. Andrew's Cross).



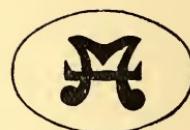
GLASGOW
(Double block letter F inverted).



DUBLIN
(Boujet).



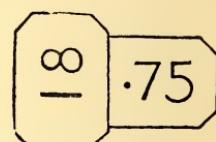
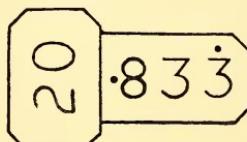
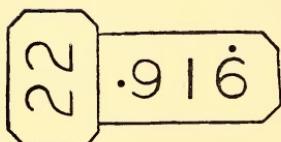
GOLD.



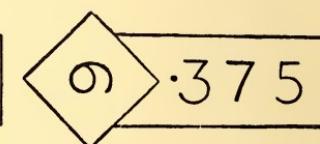
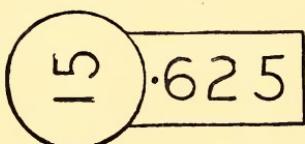
SILVER.

FIGURE 2.

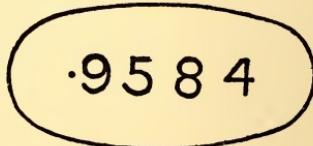
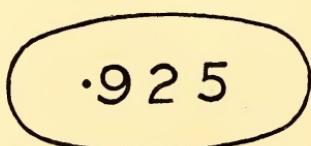
REPRESENTATION OF STANDARD MARKS.



GOLD.



GOLD.



SILVER

AT THE COURT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE, THE 7TH DAY OF MAY, 1907.

Present, the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

Whereas by the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887 (50 & 51 Vict. c. 28) it is, amongst other things, provided that :—

Section 8 (1) Every person who after the date fixed by Order in Council sends or brings a Watch Case, whether imported or not, to any Assay Office in the United Kingdom for the purpose of being assayed, stamped, or marked, shall make a declaration declaring in what country or place the case was made. If it appears by such declaration that the Watch Case was made in some country or place out of the United Kingdom, the Assay Office shall place on the case such a mark (differing from the mark placed by the office on a Watch Case made in the United Kingdom), and in such a mode as may be from time to time directed by Order in Council :

(2) The declaration may be made before an officer of an Assay Office, appointed in that behalf by the office (which officer is hereby authorised to administer such a declaration), or before a Justice of the Peace, or a Commissioner having power to administer oaths in a Supreme Court of Judicature in England or Ireland, or in the Court of Session in Scotland, and shall be in such form as may be from time to time directed by Order in Council :

(3) Every person who makes a false declaration for the purposes of this section shall be liable on conviction on indictment to the penalties of perjury, and on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £20 for each offence ;

And whereas by Order in Council dated the 28th November, 1887, her late Majesty did order and declare the marks to be placed by the authorities mentioned in such Order upon Watch Cases which had been made in some country or place out of the United Kingdom ;

And whereas it appears expedient to alter the marks prescribed by the Order in Council dated the 28th November, 1887 ;

Now, therefore, His Majesty, by and with the advice of his Privy Council, and in exercise of the powers vested in him by the above-recited provisions of the said Act, is pleased to order and declare, and doth hereby order and declare, that where it appears by the declaration required by the above-recited provisions that such Watch Cases have been made in some country or place out of the United Kingdom, then the following authorities, that is to say :—

The Wardens and Commonalty of the Mystery of Goldsmiths of the City of London ;

The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate, Birmingham ;

The Company of Goldsmiths of the City of Chester ;

The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate, Sheffield ;

The Incorporation of Goldsmiths of the City of Edinburgh ;

The Goldsmiths' Company of the City of Glasgow ;

The Fraternity or Company of the City of Dublin ;

shall respectively cause to be placed on such Watch Cases the marks more particularly described and delineated in Schedule II. hereunto

annexed, and such marks shall be substituted for the marks prescribed by the said Order in Council of the 28th November, 1887 :

And it is hereby further ordered and declared that the declaration to be made shall be in the form set forth in Schedule I. hereto annexed :

And it is hereby further ordered and declared that as from the coming into operation of this Order the said Order in Council dated the 28th November, 1887, shall be repealed :

This Order shall come into operation on the fourteenth day of May, 1907.

SCHEDULE I.

FORM OF DECLARATION.

I¹ of do hereby declare that the
 (Watch Case) (Watch Cases) (brought) (sent) by me this day to the
 Assay Office at in number and
 in a parcel marked (was) (were) made in
 Declared at this day
 of 19 .

2

Before me,³

NOTE.—This Declaration may be made before an officer of an Assay Office appointed in that behalf by the office or before a Justice of the Peace, or a Commissioner having power to administer oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature in England or Ireland or in the Court of Session in Scotland.

SCHEDULE II.

On Foreign Gold Watch Cases.

The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto: the carat value of the gold, together with the decimal equivalent of the carat value, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

On Foreign Silver Watch Cases.

The Hall-mark particular to each Assay Office, as shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix hereto, together with the decimal equivalent of the standard value of the silver, as shown in Figure 2 of the Appendix.

The mark for the annual date letter is to be added by each Assay Authority after the mark for the particular Hall and the mark for standard.

¹ Insert name, address, and description of Declarant.

² Signature of Declarant.

³ Signature of person before whom Declaration is made and appropriate description in accordance with note above.

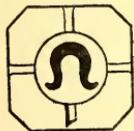
APPENDIX.

N.B.—The marks described in this Schedule are identical with those prescribed by the Order in Council dated the 11th day of May, 1906, made under the provisions of the Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate Act, 1904.

FIGURE 1.

PARTICULAR MARK FOR EACH ASSAY AUTHORITY.

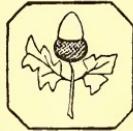
LONDON
(Sign of Constellation Leo).



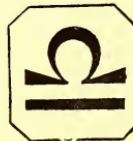
BIRMINGHAM
(Equilateral Triangle).



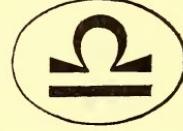
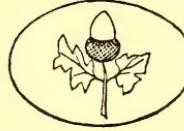
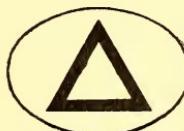
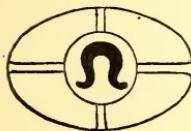
CHESTER
(Acorn and two Leaves).



SHEFFIELD
(Libra).

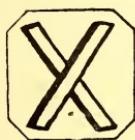


GOLD.



SILVER.

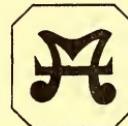
EDINBURGH
(St. Andrew's Cross).



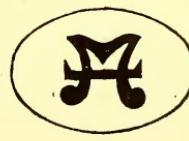
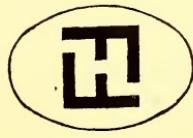
GLASGOW
(Double block letter F inverted).



DUBLIN
(Boujet).



GOLD.

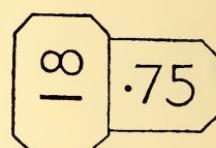
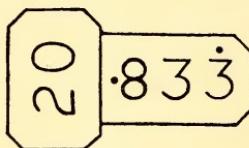
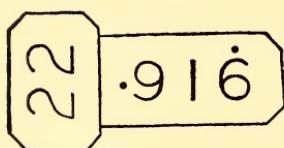


SILVER.

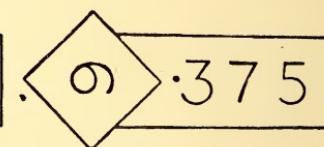
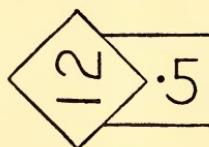
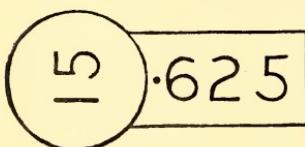
(The actual sizes of the marks are not shewn.)

FIGURE 2.
REPRESENTATION OF STANDARD MARKS.

The annual date letter is to be added by the Assay Office.



GOLD.



GOLD.

•925

•9584

SILVER.

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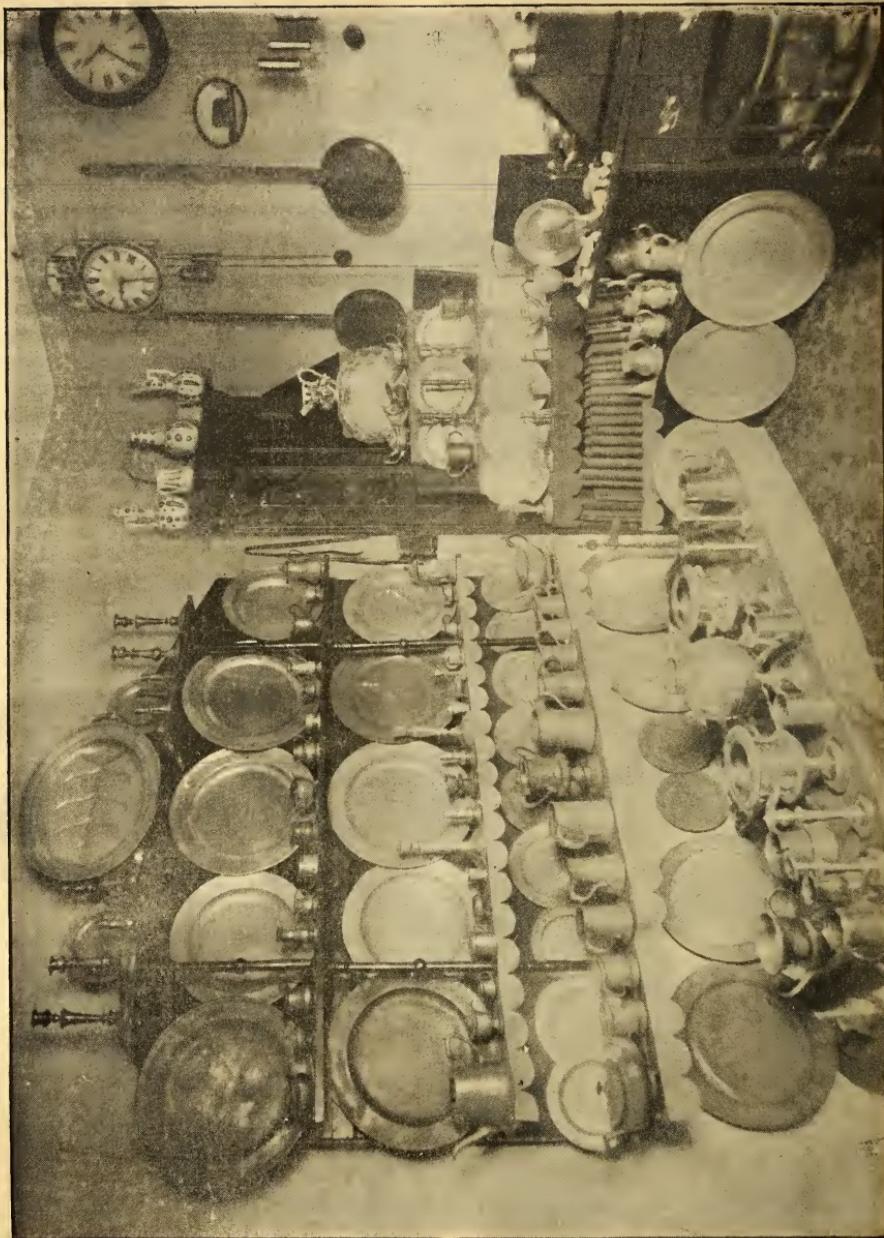
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